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APR 18 1932

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, April 18, 1932.

FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY.

Subject: "Footwear for the Youngest." Information approved by the Bureau of Chemistry and the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletin available: "Leather Shoes - Selection and Care."

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"Better take your umbrella," advised Cousin Susan, as I started for the door. "It's going to rain, sure as shooting."

"But there's hardly a cloud in the sky," I protested.

"Never mind. When my corns begin to hurt this way, it's a sure sign of rain. Ever since I was a child I've known when a shower was coming by the feeling of my corns and they're extra bad today."

"Did you say you had had corns ever since you were a child, Cousin Susan?"

"Yes, indeed. They arrived with the first pair of school shoes my mother bought me and they've stuck by me ever since."

There's no use mentioning it to Cousin Susan at this late date, but I think to be afflicted with corns from the age of six to sixty is nothing short of tragedy. And all the result, perhaps, of a pair of badly fitting shoes put on small growing feet. Yet Cousin Susan's mother was known the country around in those days because of her strong backing of the missionaries in China who were campaigning against the custom of binding the feet of Chinese girls.

Things are better all around today. Chinese women no longer have bound feet, and shoe manufacturers in this country are making children's shoes of correct design. Also, most up-to-date mothers are interested in buying the right kind of shoes for their children. There's a good deal that's worth learning on that subject. We know today that care of feet from babyhood ^{on} pays dividends in foot comfort and health all through life.

The normal foot, you know, is a flexible structure made up of 26 bones held together by muscles and ligaments in the form of a springy arch. This arch is supported by the heel at one end and the ball of the foot at the other. When standing or walking the toes should fall straight ahead, with the great toe acting as a lever, and the four small toes resting on the ground in what might be called a clinging position. There's no use trying to get around the fact that those five toes need a certain space of a certain general shape if they are to spread out

naturally and comfortably. When jammed into shoes with pointed, needle-like toes, the feet are sure to be cramped, twisted and eventually deformed. Yes, ill-fitting shoes mean toes that are crowded and piled one on another and bones that are bent.

In selecting shoes for children, it is well to remember how easily tender feet may be bent out of shape. Until the foot is full grown the bones are not like adults'. The bones of a child have a layer of cartilage between the shaft and the end.

Proper foot care begins in baby days. Strong bone structure and muscle is built by proper food. Milk, codliver oil and egg yolk are all foods that help in the development of sturdy bones. Sunshine also helps. The poor muscle and bone development of the undernourished infant is much more likely to be the cause of his bow legs than walking too early, which many people still suggest as the cause. Whether your little child is to have well-formed legs and feet may be decided by his early food and general health. However, a word of caution is due here. Since the bones and muscles of the young baby are still weak and may be injured by too much work, allow him to begin walking only when he starts of his own accord and never encourage him to go beyond his strength. Small feet and legs need a morning and afternoon rest, just as other parts of the body do. Overfatigue hinders muscular development.

What about going barefoot? A good idea in the right environment -- when temperature is mild enough and there are no slivers, tacks, pins and other dangers about. Going barefoot encourages the child to walk naturally and toe straight ahead. Toeing out, you know, weakens ankles and arches.

One more suggestion about the care of the baby's feet. Bathe and dry them thoroughly every day. Older children may use a foot brush with the bath to promote circulation. And when the toe nails are trimmed, cut them straight across to avoid ingrowing nails.

Now about footwear. A baby does not need shoes until walking time. Shoes put on before that time may do more harm than good. What's more, the baby can get along just as well without stockings or booties unless these are needed for warmth. If he does wear them, be sure that they are at least half an inch longer than the foot to allow for free toe action. Cotton stockings are probably best, unless in a very cold climate when wool is preferable, and they too should be longer than the foot.

Selecting shoes? The first walking shoes should be shaped like the natural outline of the foot and should have flexible but firm soles, unpolished -- preferably slightly buffed -- and broad enough to be a steady platform under each foot. A safe rule is to have the shoe 1 inch longer than the foot and 1/4 inch wider. It is better to have the shoes too long than too short. Firm soles, as I said, are best. Very soft soles curl and make it harder for the baby to learn balance. Stiff or board-like soles, however, should be avoided. And look for shoes with roomy toes. Toes made like moccasins are good. Often the toe of the shoe is flat so that the leather pulls straight back from the end of the sole and cramps the small toes. A shoe may have correct shape, length and width, but crowd the toes, by a skimpy upper. Patent leather shoes are not a wise choice for the health of a child's feet, since they prevent evaporation of moisture.

The responsibility for the fitting of children's shoes falls upon parents, shoe dealers and manufacturers. Very young children, of course, cannot judge correctly the design and fit of their shoes. Older children are often willing to sacrifice comfort and money for what they consider a fashionable appearance. To be comfortable, safe, durable, and attractive as well, shoes should conform to the natural shape of the feet and protect them. For the older child, select spring heels as long as they can be obtained, at least until the eighth year. After that broad low heels are best.

Our menu today is here beside me waiting to be read. Have you your pencils? All right. Here's the menu: Kidney stew; Canned or fresh asparagus served with butter; Beet salad on lettuce; Hot crusty muffins; and for dessert, Rhubarb tapioca pudding. Once more to be sure you have it all. Kidney stew; Canned or fresh asparagus served with butter; Beet salad on lettuce; Hot crusty muffins; and Rhubarb tapioca pudding.

Kidney you know is one of the meats that is a good source of several vitamins. For this reason and also because most of the fat is removed from the kidney in its preparation, it is a good meat for children. And I'm sure that when you taste the recipe that I'm about to give you, you'll consider it a stew par excellence.

Eight ingredients for kidney stew. I'll read them:

1 beef kidney	1 tablespoon of melted butter or other fat
1 cup of diced potato	1 egg yolk
1 small onion, sliced	Chopped parsley, and
3/4 teaspoon of salt	1 tablespoon lemon juice

I'll repeat that list. (REPEAT) (PLEASE READ SLOWLY)

Wash the kidney well. Remove the skin and most of the fat. Put in a kettle, cover with cold water and heat slowly to the boiling point. Then discard the water and repeat the process until there is no strong odor and no scum on the water. Now add about a quart of fresh water and simmer the kidney until tender. Then remove it and cut it into pieces. Reserve the broth and cook the potato and onion in it. After that add the kidney and salt to it. Thicken this mixture with the fat and flour, which have been blended together. Cook for a few minutes longer. Stir some of the stew into the beaten egg yolk. Mix all together and add the parsley and lemon juice. The heat of the stew will cook the egg sufficiently. Serve at once.

Beet salad is made of a mixture of diced cooked beets, diced celery, and crisp sweet green pickles chopped. Mix these with a cooked salad dressing and serve on lettuce. A very pretty salad because of the combination of colors, red, white and green.

Rhubarb tapioca? Delicious! You'll find the recipe in your radio cookbook.

Tomorrow: "Preserving Eggs for Home Use."
